



THE COMMUNICATOR

Grant County Employee Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1
January 2004
Page 1 of 4

In this quarter's issue...

Guest Columnist, Keith Govier
The Sick Buyback Benefit

Brrrrr ~ Winter Returns

Brush Up On Winter Driving Know-how
County Board Function and Compensation

Guest Columnist Keith Govier, Sheriff



The Grant County Sheriff's Department has 45 full time employees. The duties within the sheriff's department are divided up generally between Administration, Patrol and Jail. In addition to our full-time employees, the sheriff's department would not be able to conduct its business without the many part-time employees who assist in many areas, such as dispatch, jail and special deputy duties.

The department's Mission Statement is generally reflective and in response to the many statutory duties that are put upon a county law enforcement agency. In addition to being charged with keeping the peace, the sheriff's department also maintains the jail, serves the papers of the court and others, assists the court by providing security and bailiffs, transports prisoners, maintains the E-911 system, and we have developed several speciality areas within the sheriff's department.

Within the past several years we have implemented several internal department "teams" to assist the

department in accomplishing its mission. The most critical organization is the Critical Response Team (CRT). This team is deployed in emergency situations such as armed persons, barricaded persons, hostage situations, and other high risk situations. They have been instrumental in defusing several high risk, high stress situations that otherwise may have ended in tragedy and loss of life.

The most visible team to the public is the canine team. Our canine team is deployed generally to track individuals and to detect illegal drugs. They are also used a great deal as department ambassadors as the dogs and the handlers put on many presentations to civic groups, fraternal organizations, and to schools. Our department is currently going through a difficult time of memorial and transition with the loss of Coda. Coda was the first department canine under my tenure. The sheriff's department had a previous canine but it was Coda and his handler, Deputy Chad Breuer who set the standard for our current canine deployment.



Deputies Chad Breuer & Brian Monahan
with Coda and Draco.

A third team is the Dive Team. We have joined with the Crawford County Sheriff's Department in training and deploying an area dive team. They are instrumental in recovery of items and bodies that are submerged in the areas rivers, lakes, and streams. They are most noticed when they are called out to locate or recover a drowning victim. However, they also locate and recover items of evidence, such as small items of jewelry to items as large as an automobile.

And the final team that I would like to mention is a group of experienced and senior officers who are not always thought of as a team but are the backbone of the department. They help to make the department more effective and professional. They are our training officers. There are several officers who have developed and implemented this crucial training. These deputies have transitioned the department from a department that mainly participated in outside-the-department training to now providing quality in-service training. This has allowed us to increase our professionalism and to standardize our basic deputy training.

These are some of the many things that our employees are involved in that are outside their normal duties but they help the department to function at a higher response and to be more professional.

You are invited to visit the department's website www.grantcounty.org/sheriff/



Dawn Mergen
Personnel
Specialist

The Sick Buyback Benefit

What is the purpose of Grant County's sick leave buyback? The buyback benefit is intended to recognize and encourage consistent, regular attendance.

To determine if you will receive a sick leave buyback in January 2004, review these questions:

Q: Did you have an available sick leave balance of at least 192 hours (24 days) on January 1, 2003?

A: *You must answer yes to qualify.* (The 192 hour requirement is not pro-rated for regular part-time employees.)

Q: Did you use any sick leave during 2003? **A:** *If you used more in 2003 than you earned in 2003, then you don't qualify.*

How is the sick leave buyback calculated? Number of sick hours earned in 2003 minus number of sick hours used in 2003 = a figure to be divided in half which is your sick leave buyback payable in January 2004. The buyback is paid at your 12/31/2003 pay rate.

Example:

96 hours earned in 2003

- 24 hours used in 2003

= 72 hours

72 / 2 = 36 hours payable in January 2004

What does the buyback do to your sick leave balance? If you receive a sick leave buyback in January of 2004, the buyback amount is deducted from your 2003 sick leave ending balance to create a new balance to carry into 2004.

Brrrrr ~ Winter Returns

*The snow and ice season is here! It seems like we have to retrain ourselves to be careful each year when the first snow and ice threatens to knock us onto our buttocks. (Ouch!)

*Don't get stuck at work without your snow boots ~ walking to your car after work through the unexpected foot of snow in high heels or tennis shoes is a miserable and dangerous situation. If you have an extra pair of boots, bring them to work and leave them in your locker or coat area just in case you need them.

*Watch for ice patches in the parking lots. Don't expect the lots to be completely ice free.

*Try to avoid parking on patches of ice ~ people have slipped under their cars because of this.

*If you open the door to leave from work and discover ice, don't take off across it ~ many facilities have salt located near exits for you to use if needed.

*You also need to be careful on stair steps near entryways ~ it's impossible to keep them free of tracked in snow.

*Just remember to walk carefully this winter ~ it might take a little longer, but it's a lot better than a bruised bottom or broken hip.



Brush Up On Winter Driving Know-how

The first snow fall always seems like the worst. Traffic crawls. Tempers flare. Crashes occur. This winter, Highway Commissioner Stan Abing along with Superintendents Leonard Hamilton and Mike Bausch ask you to take the time to brush up on your winter driving skills.

slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow
slow	Top tips for safe winter driving:										slow
slow	Know the conditions.										slow
slow	Leave early to get where you need to go.										slow
slow	Buckle up.										slow
slow	Snow equals slow - drive slower than 55.										slow
slow	Brake early.										slow
slow	Watch for black ice.										slow
slow	Leave room for stopping.										slow
slow	Don't tailgate.										slow
slow	Focus on Driving.										slow
slow	Be patient.										slow
slow	Be courteous.										slow
slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow	slow

When ice is at or near the freezing mark, there's a thin film of water on top. A warm and icy road, which is what you are likely to encounter in late fall and early winter, is about as slippery as it can get.

When pavements and air temperatures are colder later in the winter, the ice is typically drier and tires grip it much better.

Motorists are also advised to 'cruise without the cruise' in wintry conditions and when the pavement is slippery. When motorists skid on a sudden slippery spot, they are advised to take their foot off the accelerator and steer in the direction of the skid. But if they are using cruise control, the car accelerates, and the vehicle can end up in the ditch or spinning out of control.

Anyone wishing to have a specific subject discussed in a future newsletter may contact Joyce Roling at (608)723-2045.



Eugene Bartels
County Board Chair

Since the last newsletter, we have been asked by several employees to write an article about the Grant County Board and their compensation. Who are they? What do they do? What are their benefits? You asked..... and we answered.....

COUNTY BOARD FUNCTION AND COMPENSATION

Grant County is governed by a representative from each of the county's 31 districts. These 31 representatives make up the Grant County Board of Supervisors. The county reviews the districts every ten years during population census to determine if a change is needed.

The 2001 Wisconsin Statute 59.51, states the organizational or administrative powers and duties of the board as: The board of each county shall have the authority to exercise any organizational or administrative power, subject only to the constitution and any enactment of the legislature which grants the organizational or administrative power to a county executive etc. See chapter 59 Counties of the Wisconsin Statutes for detailed information.

Duties of the Chair. The Chair of the County Board is a full-time position. The 2004 annual salary for this executive position is \$38,875.00. This is the only member of the County Board who receives a salary. The office is located in the Grant County Administration Building.

¹The chairperson shall perform all duties required of the chairperson until the board elects a successor. The chairperson shall countersign all ordinances of the board, and shall preside at all meetings. When directed by ordinance the chairperson shall countersign all county orders, transact all necessary board business with local and county orders, transact all necessary

Continued on the next page...

Current Grant County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor	District
Ivan J. Farness.....	1
Arnold Biefer, Jr.....	2
Marion E. Martin.....	3
Lois Brown.....	4
Velma Weadge.....	5
Vacant.....	6
Joachim Hans Kostrau....	7
Lynn Moris.....	8
John Murphy.....	9
Paul Landon.....	10
Robert L. Wolf.....	11
David A. Streif.....	12
Luella Vosberg.....	13
Neil Gardner.....	14
John Patcle.....	15
Robert Acton.....	16
Donald McKelvey.....	17
Patrick Schroeder.....	18
Dale L. Hood.....	19
George A. Booth.....	20
Eugene Bartels; Chair.....	21
Vincent Loeffelholz.....	22
Mark Stead.....	23
Royal Wills.....	24
Julia Clark.....	25
Dwight Nelson.....	26
Thomas A. Waters.....	27
Clinton Orton.....	28
Donald J. Splinter.....	29
Allan Jansen.....	30
Tony Runde.....	31

COUNTY BOARD FUNCTION AND COMPENSATION, Continued ...

board business with local and county officers, expedite all measures resolved upon by the board and take care that all federal state and local laws, rules and regulations pertaining to county government are enforced.

Duties of the Supervisors. The role of the Supervisor is to represent their district in which they live. They are appointed to governing committee's of the county departments. ²The County Board of Supervisors receives per diem and mileage reimbursement, life insurance and a single health insurance coverage as follows:

Per Diem. \$20 per night or \$25 per day for attending committee meeting of which they are members, board meetings, or for approved board or committee related official business. Only one per diem is allowed per day.

Mileage. 37 cents per mile (1/1/04) for attending committee meetings for which they are members, board meetings, or for approved board or committee related business travel when using personal vehicles.

Health Insurance. The County Board Supervisors are eligible for Health Insurance under the County's group health plan. The county pays the cost of a single plan and the Supervisor pays the difference should they choose a family plan.

Life Insurance. The County pays the premium for a \$10,000 term life insurance policy. The policy is reduced at age 70.

What could the annual compensation be for a County Board Supervisor? This chart (*right*) is a summary of compensation for a Supervisor who attends three meetings per month and chooses to participate in the health insurance and life insurance plans. (Some members waive participation in the county's insurance plan.)

3 meetings per month @ \$25 = \$75 \$75 x 12 months = \$900.00	\$ 900.00
Life Insurance \$2.60 x 12 months	\$ 31.20
Single plan Health Insurance \$445.25 x 12 months = \$5,343.00	\$5,343.00
Total Annual Compensation	\$6,274.20

¹ Wisconsin Statutes 51.12(1)

² Grant County Administration Manual: County Board Compensation